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DENISON'S BLACKFACE SERIES

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A Good Day's Work

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS CHICAGO

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T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers, 623 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago

A GOOD DAY'S WORK

OR

HANDY ANDY

A BLACKFACE SKIT

ARRANGED BY

WADE STRATTON

AUTHOR OF

"Almost An Actor," "An Awful Appetite," "The Barber's Bride," "A Burnt Cork Barrage," "Cash Money," "Fu'st Aid to Cupid," "Hitting the African Harp," "Kiss Me, Camille," "When Cork Is King," etc.

CHICAGO

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

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A GOOD DAY'S WORK

CHARACTERS.

OLD GRIMES.....*The Employer*
HANDY ANDY.....*The Servant*

SCENE—*Old Grimes' Kitchen.*

TIME—*Time to Go to Work.*

TIME OF PLAYING—*About Fifteen Minutes.*

TYPES AND COSTUMES.

GRIMES—Elderly negro character, with gray or white wig; fairly well dressed; costume includes a house jacket, loose house slippers and battered high hat; carries red bandana handkerchief.

ANDY—Eccentric young negro character; dilapidated costume, details optional; carries a stick with a bundle, made of a red bandana handkerchief tied together at the corners, fastened at the end.

PROPERTIES.

Kitchen table. Two chairs. Sign, "Boy Wanted." Hammer. Pan of flour on table. Newpaper on table. Handkerchief and matches for Grimes. Bundle and cigar for Andy. Pitcher. Tray with dishes to break. Unbreakable tea-pot, with lid fastened on so it will not spill when dropped. Tin cup. Broom. Envelope with letter. Two bits of candle, pasted together with tube of paper to make one big candle, that will burn at both ends and will break. Crash box off stage.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Up stage means away from footlights; *down stage,* near footlights. In the use of *right* and *left,* the actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

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A GOOD DAY'S WORK

SCENE: *Inside Grimes' house. Use kitchen or rough interior setting, if scenery is available. But this skit can be played on a bare platform if necessary. Doors right and left. Practical window, center, if available; otherwise use left door instead of window for comedy business. Kitchen table right center, with a chair on either side. Broom against wall. Pan of flour and newspaper on table.*

At rise, GRIMES *enters from right, carrying a large piece of cardboard on which is crudely lettered, "*BOY WANTED,*" and a hammer. He crosses and exits, left. There is a sound of hammering, and he re-enters left, without sign. He puts hammer on table, starts to sit in one chair, looks at it, signifies it is too dusty, goes to other chair, dusts it off with his red bandana handkerchief, sits down, removes hat and puts it on table, wipes forehead with handkerchief, suddenly remembers he dusted chair with it and indicates fear he has soiled his face. At this moment* ANDY *enters from left, with stick over his shoulder and bundle tied to end of stick. In his other hand he has the sign that* GRIMES *is supposed to have just nailed up.* GRIMES *sees him and rises. They meet at center.*

ANDY (*bowing, and hitting* GRIMES *accidentally on the head with bundle*). How do do, boss?

GRIMES. Who told you to come in?

ANDY. Nobody, boss. I just come in. (*Bows and hits* GRIMES *as before.*) Have a see-gar. (*Offers a cigar.*)

GRIMES. Boy, who is you? (*Takes cigar and lights it.*)

ANDY. Is you de gentleman what lives here?

GRIMES. Yes, I's de gentleman what lives here.

ANDY. Oh, you *is* de gentleman what lives here? (*Bows and hits* GRIMES *as before.*)

GRIMES. Cut out dis 'sault and battery! Who is you?

ANDY. 'Scuse me, boss. Here's my cyard. (*Hands* GRIMES *the sign.*) Does you want a boy now?

GRIMES. Yes, I wants a boy now—and fo' some time to come, if he's—(*Is interrupted by a violent fit of coughing, and sinks into chair, making signs for help by snapping his fingers.* ANDY *at first thinks* GRIMES *is snapping his fingers for him to dance, and does a few grotesque double-shuffle or buck and wing steps. Then he realizes that* GRIMES *is in distress. Gets his stick, puts it down* GRIMES' *back and forces him to sit upright; then fans him with newspaper.* GRIMES *pulls the stick loose and throws it at* ANDY.) Boy, where did you git dat see-gar?

ANDY. Why, boss, I—I done found it.

GRIMES. Well, next time you see a strange see-gar layin' around, you leave it lay! What's yo' name?

ANDY. Andy.

GRIMES. Andy what?

ANDY. Andy, if you please.

GRIMES. Is Andy all de name you got?

ANDY. Folks calls me Handy Andy.

GRIMES. Dat's a very good kind of a name, and I hope you will prove very handy, Andy. What was de last work you did?

ANDY. Work is de last thing I ever would do.

GRIMES. I means where was you last occupied?

ANDY. I occupied de county jail fo' six months.

GRIMES (*getting impatient*). What was de last thing you done?

ANDY. Six months.

GRIMES. Where was you raised.

ANDY. I wasn't raised. De rope busted and I got away.

GRIMES. What did you do before you went to jail?

ANDY. Got arrested.

GRIMES. Of course. But what for? Did you rob a henroost?

ANDY. No, boss, I didn't rob no henroost. I jes' *tried* to rob a henroost.

GRIMES. What did you do befo' dat?

ANDY. I was a farmer's boy.

GRIMES. Do you think you could wait on me?

ANDY (*scratches head*). Reckon I could. I used to tend to de hogs.

GRIMES (*threatening him*). Never mind dat! You git to work. (*Sits in chair at right of table.*)

ANDY. Wait a minute, boss. Dey's one topic of conversation dat ain't been disgusted in detail.

GRIMES. What you mean?

ANDY. You knows dog-gone well what I means. What does I git?

GRIMES. You gits a job.

ANDY (*sits left of table and looks sternly at* GRIMES). What does I git in wages, ol' man?

GRIMES. Wages?

ANDY. Yassuh. Wages; cash money! (*Starts pushing table slowly toward* GRIMES.)

GRIMES. Bless my soul! Who ever heard of such exactitude?

ANDY. I ain't mentioned exactitude. I says wages; cash money. How much does I git?

GRIMES (*defiantly*). Who wants to know?

ANDY. Handy Andy! (*Pushes table suddenly against* GRIMES, *who tilts back and nearly upsets. He returns the table vigorously against* ANDY, *who tumbles backward off his chair.*)

GRIMES (*striding toward* ANDY). I'll tell you what I'll do wid you. I'll give you nothin' at all the fu'st year. (*Takes* ANDY *by the collar.*) And de second year, I'll raise you. (*Lifts* ANDY *to his feet.*)

ANDY (*drawing away timidly*). Keep yo' hands off o' me. I don't like to git raised.

GRIMES. Well, git busy; git busy.

ANDY. Yassuh, boss. An' what is de particularities of my job of employment?

GRIMES. Fu'st, I want you to keep de house.

ANDY. Yassuh. I won't leave nobody run off wid it.

GRIMES. And look to de door.

ANDY. I's lookin' at it now.

GRIMES. And take out de garbage.

ANDY. Yassuh.

GRIMES. And carry out all my orders.

ANDY. Yo' orders and de garbage will be carried out together.

GRIMES. Now, go down dem stairs (*points off right*), and you'll see de kitchen. You'll find my Dinah there.

ANDY. Boss, what do you think this is, a Pullman car? (*Disgustedly.*) Dineh!

GRIMES. I said Dinah; my servant.

ANDY. Oh; de kitchen mechanic.

GRIMES. She'll tell you where to put your things.

ANDY (*starting to go unwillingly*). Anoder colored folks in dis house. Me and de other old woman'll be havin' a battle all de time.

GRIMES. Dis ain't a old woman. Dis is a young yaller gal.

ANDY. Young? (*Enthusiastically.*) Oh, kitchen, kitchen; I hear you callin' me! (*Picks up his stick and bundle and rushes off right.*)

GRIMES (*sits at table and picks up newspaper*). Ah, it looks like Handy Andy is jest de boy what I wanted; spry and energetic; and so quiet. (*Loud crash off right.*) I want some cool water. I'm dyin' wid thirst. (*Calls.*) Andy! Handy Andy!

ANDY (*off right*). Suh?

GRIMES. Here!

ANDY (*off right*). Yassuh.

GRIMES. What?

ANDY (*off right*). I hear you.

GRIMES. Come here dis moment.

ANDY. I can't; I's engaged. (*Another loud crash off right.*)

GRIMES. Engaged to my gal already? Come here, you black bottle of ink.

ANDY *enters, right.*

ANDY (*sulkily*). You's always wantin' somethin'.

GRIMES. What you been doin'?

ANDY. Gettin' acquainted with yo' yaller gal.

GRIMES. How come all dat noise?

ANDY. Jes' me and Dinah droppin' a few remarks.

GRIMES. Git me some drinkin' water.

ANDY (*starting right*). Yassuh. (*Turns.*) Some drinkin' water? Yassuh! (*Goes out right and immediately returns with a pitcher, which he places on table.*)

GRIMES (*picking up pitcher, and about to drink from it*). Now fo' a good long inwigoratin' swig of— (*Looks in pitcher.*) What's dis, ink?

ANDY. No, suh. I jes' dumped a cup of coffee in de water.

GRIMES. How come?

ANDY. You said you wanted some drinkin' water.

GRIMES. Well?

ANDY. Coffee is drink. So I done give you some drink in water.

GRIMES (*starts to throw pitcher at* ANDY *and then checks himself*). You is a tricky black rascal!

ANDY. Yassuh. Same to you, suh. (*Laughs heartily.*)

GRIMES (*shouts*). Shet up yo' liver-lipped mouth or I'll have it nailed up, or a door built on to it. Here (*gives pitcher to* ANDY), heave dis here junk outen de window. (ANDY *drops pitcher through window. Crash off stage.*) Hey? (*Sinks into chair.*) Is de roof comin' in? What in Sam Hill has you done, niggeh?

ANDY (*looking out window, laughs heartily*). It done hit a lady plumb on de head. She sure has ruined dat pitcher!

GRIMES (*angrily*). Hustle yo' dogs, black boy! Go down in de kitchen and git my toast and tea. (*Picks up newspaper.*)

ANDY (*shuffles off right, and immediately returns*). Does you want butter on yo' toast?

GRIMES (*reading paper, snappishly*). Yes!

ANDY (*disappears and re-appears, as before*). Bofe sides?

GRIMES. No!

ANDY (*same bus.*). On de edges?

GRIMES. I'll edge you.

ANDY (*same bus.*). What kind of toast does you desire?

GRIMES. Dry toast! Git out, befo' I busts yo' neck. (ANDY *exits right.*) I'm clean discombobbolated. (*Slides down in chair, sleepily, and lets paper fall over his face; speaks with muffled voice under it.*) He's de wustest boy I ever see in all my born days. (*Falls asleep and snores.*)

ANDY *enters right, and observes that* GRIMES *is asleep.*

ANDY (*sings, to a made-up tune*):

I've heard tigers holler,
I've heard lions roar.
But I never heard nothin'
Like that before.

(*Stealthily approaches* GRIMES, *picks up paper and peeps underneath at* GRIMES' *face. Sings*:)

I've travelled all over
From North to South,
But I never seen nothin'
Like dat nigger's mouth.

GRIMES (*awakening*). What you mean disturbin' me, boy? Where's my tea and toast?

ANDY. You wants dry toast, boss?

GRIMES. Sure I wants dry toast. Fetch it here.

ANDY. 'Tain't dry yit.

GRIMES. Is it on de fire?

ANDY. No; I hung it on de clothes line to dry.

GRIMES. Fool! Go and git it! (*Pushes against* ANDY, *who resists.*) Go and git it! (*Same business.*) Go and git it! (*Pushes again, but this time* ANDY *doubles down and* GRIMES *falls over him.*)

ANDY (*laughing*). Did you say go and git it? (*Exit right.*)

GRIMES (*mutters angrily to himself*). Did I say go and git it! (*Yells after* ANDY). Yes, I said go and git it, you great, big, flat-footed, liver-lipped, lazy, no-count, low-down, dog-gone—

ANDY *enters hastily, from right, with tray of dishes and tea-pot.*

ANDY. Comin' to you, boss; comin' to you. (*Trips and drops tray, which falls with a crash.*)

GRIMES. Pick it up, you clumsy-footed, butter-fingered, misguided offspring of adversity! (ANDY *hastily scrambles the dishes and fragments back on the tray and picks it up.*) Sot it down! (*Places his left hand on the edge of the table.* ANDY *sits on his hand.*) I didn't say *set* down. I says *sot it* down! (ANDY *gets up.*) Git de tea. (ANDY *puts tray on far end of table, and picks up tea-pot; it is hot, and he keeps passing it from one hand to the other*). Sot it down here! (*Pounds right hand on table.* ANDY *puts tea-pot on* GRIMES' *hand.* GRIMES *jumps up, with business of burnt hand, putting it in his mouth, blowing on it, etc.*) What kind of treatment is dis? Are you tryin' to scalp me?

ANDY. Dis ain't no scalp treatment, boss.

GRIMES. Git a cup. (*Comic business by* ANDY *of getting cup while tea-pot is burning fingers.*) Pour me a drink of tea.

ANDY. How much?

GRIMES. Enough fo' to drink.

ANDY. About one finger?

GRIMES. About four fingers and a thumb. (*Takes cup and holds fingers around it.* ANDY *starts to pour tea, and* GRIMES *throws the drops from cup into* ANDY'S *face.*) Pour some tea! (ANDY *starts pouring carefully into cup held by* GRIMES. *Then his attention strays from cup to* GRIMES' *face, and he pours tea on* GRIMES' *hand.* GRIMES *drops cup, and roars with rage. When* GRIMES *drops cup,* ANDY *drops tea-pot in fright, at the same time pushing tray and*

dishes from table to floor; crash.) You great, big, low-down, monkey-faced—

ANDY. Boss, you done said all dat before.

GRIMES. You lazy bag o' bones, git to work. Git a broom and clean up dis mess. (*Picks up newspaper angrily and sits down to read.* ANDY *starts to clean up but makes so much noise* GRIMES *cannot read. Turns angrily.*) Hush dat fuss! (*Resumes reading.* ANDY *reverses broom and pretends to brush high in the air.* GRIMES *turns again and sees him.*) What you up to?

ANDY. Pooty nigh up to de ceilin'.

GRIMES. What are you doin'?

ANDY. Sweepin' down de spiders.

GRIMES. You better hadn't.

ANDY. How come I better hadn't?

GRIMES. Bad luck.

ANDY. Go long! What's spiders good for?

GRIMES. Good for flies. (*Picks up hat from table, puts it on and resumes reading.*)

ANDY (*shouldering broom, in burlesque military fashion*). Shouldeh—humph! Company, atten—humph! Mark—humph! (*Marks time.*) Fix—bay'nets! (*Comedy business with broom.*) Over de top—humph! (*Twirls broom over* GRIMES' *head so it knocks his hat off.*) Charge—bay'nets! (*Rushes toward window and pokes broom handle out of window. Glass crash.*)

GRIMES. More trouble. You broke de window!

ANDY. It was cracked befo'!

GRIMES. Shut up yo' noise; you'll split my head!

ANDY. It was cracked befo'.

(*Doorbell rings.*)

GRIMES (*motioning toward left*). Answer de door.

ANDY. De door ain't said a word.

GRIMES. Answer de doorbell.

ANDY (*threateningly*). Don't you call me no dumb-bell! (*Exit left door, and immediately re-enters, tearing open an envelope.*)

GRIMES. Who de letter for?

ANDY. Reckon it's for you, boss.

GRIMES (*snatching it*). How dare you open my letters?

ANDY. To save you de trouble.

GRIMES. Go fetch me a candle. (ANDY *exits right.*) And remember, I wants it lighted, too.

ANDY *re-enters, right, with a candle that is lighted at both ends.*

GRIMES (*amazed*). Well, what do you call dat?

ANDY. You said you wanted it lighted *too.*

GRIMES. Blow out one end.

ANDY. Which end?

GRIMES. De bottom end.

ANDY. Which is de bottom end?

GRIMES. De heavy end.

ANDY. Ain't no heavy end. Both ends is light.

(*They both blow at the same time, each blowing out one of the ends.*)

ANDY *and* GRIMES (*together*). What fo' did you blow out de wrong end?

GRIMES. Go and light one end.

(ANDY *starts right, falls and breaks candle, exits right and immediately re-enters with one end lighted. Meanwhile* GRIMES *prepares to read the letter, turning it over several times, scowling, etc.* ANDY *holds lighted candle for* GRIMES *to read, but forgets to pay attention, toying with unlighted piece of candle, tasting it and grimacing, etc.*)

GRIMES. Reckon it's from my daughter. Hol' dat light! (*Reads.*) "My dearest father—" (ANDY *weeps loudly.*) What you blubberin' 'bout?

ANDY (*crying*). I had a father once.

GRIMES. Well, who ever heard of anybody havin' a father twice? Hol' dat light! (*Reads.*) "I have been under de doctor's care, and hopin' you are de same, please turn over." (ANDY *turns a somersault.*) What are you doin'?

ANDY. Turnin' over.

GRIMES. It means turn over on de other side. (ANDY *rolls over sideways.*) Cut out dem monkeyshines and hold dat light! (*Reads.*) "Dey would not pass me at my examination. Dey said I was a donkey. I am, your lovin' daughter, Sarah Ann."

(ANDY, *in curiosity over letter, brings candle close to it and sets it afire as* GRIMES *finishes reading. Fast hurry music.* GRIMES *burns his fingers, drops letter, goes after* ANDY *and chases him once around the table. Then* ANDY *grabs* GRIMES *by the neck and shoves his face down into pan of flour on table.* GRIMES *comes up with face white, blows flour from mouth, gropes in front of him as if blinded, etc.* ANDY *runs once around table, pushing tray, dishes, etc., off on to the floor, with* GRIMES *in pursuit. Then he jumps out window with taunting yell. Loud glass crash.* GRIMES *shakes his fists in anger, picks up "Boy Wanted" sign, and starts despairingly for left door, as—*)

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

DENISON'S ACTING PLAYS

Partial List of Successful and Popular Plays. Large Catalogue Free

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I'm a Nut, 10 min.....	1	
It Might Happen, 20 min.....	1	1
Little Miss Enemy, 15 min....	1	1
Little Red School House, 20 m.	4	
Marriage and After, 10 min..	1	
One Sweetheart for Two, 20 m.		2
Oyster Stew, 10 min.....	2	
Pete Yansen's Gurl's Moder, 10m.	1	
Quick Lunch Cabaret, 20 min..	4	
School of Detecting, 15 min...	2	
Si and I, 15 min.....		1
Special Sale, 15 min.....	2	
Street Faker, 15 min.....	3	
Such Ignorance, 15 min.....	2	
Sunny Son of Italy, 15 min..	1	
Time Table, 20 min.....	1	1
Tramp and the Actress, 20 min.	1	1
Troubles of Rozinski, 15 min..	1	
Two Jay Detectives, 15 min..	3	
Umbrella Mender, 15 min....	2	
Vait a Minute, 20 min.....	2	

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Battle of Rollin' Bones, 30 min.	8	
Black Vamp, 15 min.....	2	2
Booster Club of Blackville, 25 min. 10		
Cash Money, 20 min.....	3	
Colored Honeymoon, 25 min...	2	2
Coon Creek Courtship, 15 m...	1	1
Coontown Thirteen Club, 25 m.14		
Dark Secret, 30 min.....	4	1
Fu'st Aid to Cupid, 20 min...	3	2
Good Mornin', Judge, 35 min..	9	2
Hitting the African Harp, 15 min.	2	
Hungry, 15 min.....	2	
Kiss Me, Camille, 20 min.....	2	1
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